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OF

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JAMES M'CORKLE, the subject of this short narrative, was born in Greenville, Tennessee, February 23d, 1830. When very young he was sent to Sabbath-school. He soon became attached to the school, and was rarely absent except when providentially detained. He was serious and attentive while at school, and as soon as he had learned to read, would spend the Sabbath evenings in reading the books which his teacher had given him; and would often relate a considerable part of the contents of these and other little books to one or both of his parents, frequently expressing

the wish that he was like the individuals of whom he had read. Such at this early period was his frequent petition at the throne of grace. Often in secret did he pray that God would take away his wicked heart and give him a good heart. We have much evidence that God, who has declared "Those that seek me early shall find me," had heard and answered the prayer of little James years before his death.

At a very early age James appeared to be the subject of religious impressions. His parents often conversed with him upon the subject of religion. They presented before his infant mind the goodness of God, manifested in the formation of his little body, his hands, his feet, his eyes, his ears, all conducing to his comfort. They enumerated the many blessings which surrounded him: they reminded him of the law of God, so good and so

well adapted, if obeyed, to promote his happiness in this world and through eternity. At the same time they told him how wicked he had been in hating so good a Being, and in breaking so excellent a law. Then would they show the benevolence of the Savior in dying for him to save him from endless misery and to make him happy for ever. At such times he appeared serious and solemn; his countenance indicated sorrow and remorse of conscience; and he often said that his heart was very wicked; that he was sorry he had been so wicked; that he often prayed to God to take away his wicked heart and give him a good heart, that he might love the Savior and obey him.

When young he manifested a mild and governable disposition, readily yielding to the commands of his parents and superiors: seldom did he disobey his parents; and when he

did, and was reproved for it, he exhibited great grief, acknowledged his fault, asked forgiveness, and promised to try to obey them better in future. He was kind and affectionate to his only sister and two little brothers; and rarely, if ever, did he dispute or quarrel with his little playmates.

He never used profane language, and was not willing even to repeat any profane expression which he heard others use. He was displeased with such persons, and avoided them.

It is not known that he ever told a falsehood. He thought lying a great crime—that those children who told a falsehood were very guilty, and that God was angry with them. When he was accused of doing wrong he would not tell a falsehood to escape correction; but would acknowledge his fault and ask forgiveness.

Little James possessed an attentive and thoughtful mind. He cheerfully

attended public worship on the Sabbath. He sat still at church—was attentive and serious; and often after he returned home related those parts of the discourse which impressed him most. He believed that the Sabbath was the Lord's day, and that it should be kept holy.

He believed that the Bible was a great blessing. When he had a little money which he could call his own, and it was proposed to him either to purchase with it something to please his fancy or gratify his taste, or to give it to send the Gospel to the perishing heathen, the latter would be his quick decision.

For two or three years before his death he gave evidence that he was the subject of the operations of the Holy Spirit. During this period the writer frequently conversed with him. He often said that he was sorry he had sinned against God, but not as

sorry as he ought to be; that he loved God, and often prayed that he might love him more, and serve him better.

In the month of July, 1840, in the tenth year of his age, he was attacked with a violent fever. The disease advanced rapidly; he became deranged, and at intervals lost the recollection of speech, accompanied with other alarming symptoms. For a few days his life appeared to be in imminent danger. Then did his parents renewedly give him in covenant to God, and importunately pray that his reason might be restored, that they might know the state of his mind in view of death.

On the eighth day the disease appeared slightly to abate. It gradually yielded so far that in a few days he was calm, and reason was perfectly restored. He was then asked if he had realized how dangerously sick he had been—if he had been praying to

God to pardon his sins, and if he had given his heart to the Savior. He answered, "Yes, I have been praying many years to God to pardon my sins, to take away my sinful heart, and give me a good heart, and make me a good child. I have been praying ever since I was a little child, when my mother taught me to pray Sabbath nights. I prayed and gave myself to God on the day that I was taken sick. I love God, but not half so much as I ought to love a Being who is so holy, who made me, and who has been so good to me."

During six or eight weeks he appeared to be slowly recovering; but then his health began again to decline. His bowels were seriously affected; but by the use of appropriate means were relieved. His lungs were then attacked. He suffered some pain in the breast, and at times coughed almost incessantly. His constitution

had become so enfeebled that he sank under disease after an illness of about three months. The last ten weeks he had his reason, and suffered but little pain.

When he began to recover from the attack of fever, and thought he should get well, he expressed a strong desire to attend the Sabbath-school again. He was asked if he would be willing to give up his interest in Christ, if the whole world could be given him instead. He promptly replied, "I take Christ for my portion and Savior; for if I had the whole world I can live but a few years, and then my soul would be lost; but if I trust in Christ, I shall be happy for ever." He was asked if, after death, he would not rather go to another world like this, where he could be surrounded by his friends, than to go into the presence of a holy God who hates sin. He replied, "If I should die

I would rather go directly to heaven where God is, where I could join with all holy beings in worshipping and praising him for ever."

He was often seen with his eyes closed and his lips moving in prayer. If he was long interrupted by conversation or otherwise, he became restless, desiring an opportunity to commune with God in prayer. Once a friend who had visited him remained some time conversing. He called his mother and whispered to her that he wanted something, then turned and closed his eyes. When the friend retired he said, "I wanted to pray to God, to thank him that I felt so well; and I could not do it as I wished while they were conversing."

Another time, a friend asked him if he thought he should forget God if he got well? "No, I never can forget God; I have been praying to God too long to forget him. I never can for-

get God." He was frequently heard praying, "Lord, make my poor sinful heart more holy, that I may love thee more, and serve thee better." Again he would exclaim, "Lord, I give my sinful soul and body away to thee,

"'Tis all that I can do.'"

These feelings evidently did not arise from the fear of death, for he thought at this time that he should recover. He was asked if he was not afraid his soul would be lost if he should die. "No, I love God, and I believe when I die I shall go where God is, where I shall love him more, and praise him for ever." He appeared to have the Spirit of God witnessing with his spirit that he was a child of God.

One day, lying for some time apparently in deep thought, he suddenly burst into a flood of tears: "O," said he, "I am so sorry that I have sin-

ned against God, who is so good and holy, who made me, and who has given me every thing that I have." His feelings resembled those of the pious David, who was so affected with his sin *as against God*, that he exclaimed, "against thee, thee only have I sinned." The sorrow of James was evidently not that of the world which worketh death, but a repentance unto salvation.

After he had been confined more than two months, and had become very much emaciated, his bowels became inflamed, and it was feared he would not survive. He was asked if he was willing to die. "If it is the will of God," said he, "I should like to live a little longer with my dear parents, that I may obey them, and that I may do good in the world; but if it is not his will, I am willing to die, for I shall go to heaven, that holy place, where the great and good God

will be my Father; where I shall meet some of my dear friends (naming them) and join with all holy beings in praising God for ever and ever, and where I expect to meet my dear father and mother when they are dead." Here he was overcome by his feelings.

His friends in the village frequently visited him during his illness, and some of them brought him presents. He often observed, "O how thankful should I be to God, and how should I love him, for giving me so many kind friends."

At times he became restless and impatient; but feeling that he had done wrong, he asked his mother to forgive him for being such a naughty child.

About ten days before his death, though pale and feeble, he began to unite with the other members of the family in singing at family worship.

This he continued to do until his strength failed.

He soon became so ill that it was evident to his friends that he must die. He himself began to think he could not live. He was asked if he was willing to die, and if he could trust his soul in the hands of the Savior? "Yes, I am willing to die, if it is the will of God. I can trust my soul with the Savior. I give my sinful self away to him."

A few days before his death he often repeated the verse,

"Jesus can make a dying bed
"Feel soft as downy pillows are,
"While on his breast I lean my head
"And breathe my life out sweetly there."

As he expected to die, he became anxious about the salvation of his sister, aged twelve, and his eldest brother, aged seven years. He asked his father to try to make them good chil-

dren. He inquired of his sister if she prayed to God to give her a good heart. A few days after, while his sister was sitting by his bed-side attending upon him, he was observed by a person lying in the same room, earnestly persuading her to give her heart to God. As she sat weeping, he said to her, "Can't you pray, 'Lord, take away this sinful heart, and give me a good heart? Lord, I give myself away to thee'—cannot you do this?"

A few days before his death he told his sister and eldest brother that if he died he left to each of them, and to his father and mother, and youngest brother, some pieces of money, and some other things which he had, by which they might remember him; and if they were willing, they might give the money to send the Gospel to the heathen. He was not only anxious that his impenitent *friends*

should love the Savior who supported and comforted him on a dying bed; but he was willing and desirous to give all he possessed to publish the Savior to the perishing *heathen*, that they might enjoy his comfort and his hope on a death-bed, and his happiness in heaven.

The day before his death he talked but little, and was much engaged in prayer. Feeling that he was entering Jordan's waves, and that beyond its flood the heavenly world was rising in sight, he began to sing the hymn,

"On Jordan's stormy banks I stand," &c.

After singing the first two lines, his strength failed. The next morning, October 21, 1840, he died, in the tenth year of his age.

THE END.

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